



# Clermont County On The Move

a newsletter for citizens

Commissioners: Mary Walker, Bob Proud, and Scott Croswell

March, 2004

[www.co.clermont.oh.us](http://www.co.clermont.oh.us)

## Clermont County to Assume Operation of Water System

Effective May 17, 2004, operation and maintenance of the Clermont County water treatment, water distribution, and water/sewer billing systems will be internalized.

“In recent years the waterworks system has experienced changes in regulatory requirements, source water protection, increased demand for response to customer issues, permit costs, and repairs. These additional costs and resources were not anticipated in the original contract to operate the systems. The additional requirements would have necessitated the rebidding of the contract,” said Clermont County Director of Utilities, Tom Yeager. “It is no longer feasible to have an outside agency operate these services. Bringing them inside the County ensures that we will be able to provide our customers with the best service possible at a reasonable cost, while maintaining and expanding for needs of the future.”

The Board of Clermont County Commissioners voted on February 11, 2004, to terminate an agreement with Operations Management International, Inc. (OMI) which had operated the County system since March 2000. Additional duties not specified in the original contract with OMI would have necessitated rebidding of the contract. After careful examination it was determined that it would be in the best interest of the County and its citizens to bring the water operation in-house.

### *Come to a Town Meeting!*

The Board of Clermont County Commissioners will hold the first town meeting of 2004, on Tuesday, March 30, at 7:00 p.m. The first town meeting will be hosted by the Village of Batavia and Batavia Township, and will be held at the Batavia Twp. Town Hall, 2401 Old State Route 32, in Batavia.



### March Commissioner Sessions

Wed., March 3	1:00 p.m.
Tues., March 9	1:00 p.m.
Wed., March 10	1:00 p.m.
Tues., March 16	1:00 p.m.
Wed., March 17	1:00 p.m.
Tues., March 23	1:00 p.m.
Wed., March 24	1:00 p.m.
Tues., March 30	1:00 p.m.
Wed., March 31	1:00 p.m.

All regular sessions are held in the third floor session room of the Clermont County Administration Building, 101 East Main Street in Batavia, Ohio. For agenda information, contact the BCC offices at (513) 732-7300.

# Coming Soon: Debit Cards for Child Support Payments

By: Brenda Gilreath, Deputy Director, Job and Family Services, Child Support Enforcement

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has chosen Clermont County as one of six counties in the state to launch a pilot debit card disbursement program.

Beginning in May, child support recipients in Clermont and five other counties will be given the option of getting their payments via Electronic Disbursements (eDisbursements) instead of waiting for a check to come in the mail. Funds will be associated with a stored value card, like MasterCard, and will enable easy access to cash and services through banks, ATMs and point-of-sale (merchant) stores.

The new service is expected to be faster, cheaper, and more convenient for many of those receiving child support. The state anticipates that this program could save millions of dollars in postage and other costs

that can be linked to paper transactions.

The enrollment process will begin in May and will target individuals who currently receive their child support via a check. Pilot operations are expected to run through December of 2004 with statewide implementation targeted for January of 2005.

Key staff members of CSE will work closely with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, ACS who administers Child Support Payment Central (CSPC) in Columbus, and representatives from the five other pilot counties to assist with planning, development, and implementation of this new and exciting initiative. Stay tuned for updates, as the pilot program progresses.



## Supreme Court Coming to Clermont County

Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer has announced that the Supreme Court of Ohio will convene in Batavia on Wednesday, April 28, for its semiannual off-site court program. Four oral arguments will be heard by Chief Justice Moyer and the six associate justices at the Clermont County Courthouse, 270 E. Main Street in Batavia beginning at 9 a.m.



"This is a great honor for the citizens of Clermont County and an excellent opportunity for our high school students to learn, hands-on, how the judicial system works," said Judge William Walker of the Clermont County Court of Common Pleas, chair of the local off-site court committee.

Public, private, and home-schooled high school students from throughout Clermont County have been invited to participate in the program. The students and their teachers will be provided with curriculum material to study before the session. Local attorneys will team with the educators to teach the specifics about the cases to be heard. On the morning of April 28, student journalists and local media will be invited to attend a press briefing where they can interact with justices of the Court. Students from each participating school will be assigned to attend one of the oral arguments. After their assigned case has been argued, each group of students will meet with the case attorneys for a debriefing.

"The idea of this program is to bring the Court closer to the public and especially young people," Moyer said.

## East Fork River Sweep/Clean and Green

By: John McManus, Office of Environmental Quality

On Saturday, April 24, the organizers of the annual East Fork River Sweep and Clean and Green Neighborhood Clean-Ups are joining forces to hold the largest volunteer clean-up effort in Ohio. Come for a canoe ride and help clean-up the banks of the East Fork of the Little Miami River. There will also be a clean-up site along Stonelick Creek near the state park. To find out more information, or to register for the East Fork River Sweep, call the East Fork State Park at 734-4323. Anyone interested in joining the Clean and Green Neighborhood Clean-Up should call Clermont 20/20 at 753-9222. Additional information is available at [www.oeq.net](http://www.oeq.net).

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# Concealed Carry Law

By: Sheriff A.J. "Tim" Rodenberg

What's going on with Ohio's recently enacted conceal carry law? To keep Clermont County citizens up to date, the Sheriff's office has established a concealed carry information phone line that can be accessed around the clock at 395-3354. This information line will contain a recorded message that will be changed periodically.

The Clermont County Sheriff's Office website: [www.clermontsheriff.org](http://www.clermontsheriff.org) also has a link on the homepage that will contain Concealed Carry information. It is our hope that by providing concealed carry information through these two sources, the application and issuance process for concealed carry licenses will proceed more smoothly and with less confusion when the law becomes effective in early April.

## COMMON PLEAS COURT RECEIVES GRANT TO IMPLEMENT A NEW PROBATION PROGRAM FOR MENTALLY ILL OFFENDERS

By: Bruce Gibson, Common Pleas Adult Probation

Since 2001, the Clermont County jail medical records have reported a significant increase in the number of inmates who attended regular visits with the jail psychiatrists. Many of these inmates were prescribed medications for depression and other mental illnesses. A percentage of those receiving medications were listed as felony offenders with nonviolent offenses. In response to this increasing population, the Clermont County Common Pleas Adult Probation Department created a program for mentally ill offenders.

In January, 2004, the General Division of the Common Pleas Court received a grant from the Byrne Memorial Grant, sponsored by the Office of Criminal Justice Services. The Byrne Grant is for \$37,203 and is locally matched by the Clermont County Mental Health Board for \$12,401. The funds received will be used to facilitate a new Intensive Treatment Program within the Probation Department. The program will focus on the supervision of those offenders diagnosed with mental health disorders, receiving medications, attending intensive mental health counseling, or offenders who may act out inappropriately due to mental illness.

An increasing number of those in jail are offenders diagnosed with mental illness. With the help of Byrne Memorial Foundation, the Adult Probation Department will dedicate one probation officer to supervise and monitor these felony offenders,

specifically focusing on mental health treatment.

The Intensive Treatment Program's goal is to divert offenders from incarceration, either in the county jail or state prison. Research has indicated offenders with mental illness who are sentenced to incarceration have a higher rate of recidivism once they are released, unless they receive appropriate aftercare treatment. With the Intensive Treatment Program, the specialized probation officer will closely monitor the offenders through probationary services and mental health treatment, rather than incarceration.

## What's Happening at Clermont County Parks?

By: Keith Robinson, naturalist

*Signs of Spring* at Crooked Run Nature Preserve  
Saturday March 6, 11:00 a.m.

Emerging woodland wildflowers, and the return of migrating birds, are just a few signs that spring is on it's way. Join the Naturalist for a walk through Crooked Run Nature Preserve as we look and listen for these and other signs that spring is just around the corner. Meet at the Naturalist Office.

